

Corridors Subcommittee

Summary of Subcommittee Input

The Corridors Subcommittee was charged with discussing the only geographical study area that has a direct physical impact on each of the other seven subcommittee areas. The group looked at the major roadways that span the entire township. Each corridor that was addressed was looked at through its entire length in Washington Township. The committee looked at US 31, SR 32, SR 38, and 146th Street. The committee also considered Towne Road because of its potential future as a primary arterial in the township (according to the current Thoroughfare Plan).

Traffic flow along the corridors was of great concern to the committee. As background information for the subcommittee process, the group discussed the planned widening of SR 32 (west of US 31) and the ever-changing status of the US 31 road improvement project. According to group discussions, one of the greatest threats and weaknesses that faces the future of our corridors is the unknown future of US 31. The group also discussed the need to update the Town's thoroughfare plan to better reflect what we now know about the most recent decisions regarding the fate of US 31.

The committee expressed the desire for the community to be proactive in setting development standards along our state and federal highways and in working with INDOT on plans for future US 31 and SR 32 improvements. In regard to the US 31 improvement project, the group would like to see the community work with the State to gain an interchange at US 31 and 161st Street.

Keeping with the group's desire to maintain safe and efficient traffic flow throughout the township's corridors, many discussions led to minimizing and controlling the number of direct access cuts that are allowed on those roadways. Several ideas spurred from this theme. The committee discussed the idea of creating a network of frontage roads along the corridors. A frontage road system limits access to the main corridor, while providing the visibility from the main roadway that many businesses seek and require. The committee also discussed cross access between uses as another method of limiting road cuts and internalizing traffic movement.

The committee expressed a strong desire that all future development along the corridors should display high architectural and site-design standards because these roadways represent the gateways and front doors to the Westfield community. The group discussed the importance of the aesthetic appearance of the corridors to residents, visitors, and passers-by. Another popular idea that addresses aesthetics is to locate the intensity/density of a project toward its interior. This allows for greenspace, open space, and landscaping along the perimeter of a project (especially along the sides visible from the corridors).

The group also expressed the desire to locate heavier intensity uses (such as open industrial) away from the corridor frontages for aesthetic and traffic flow reasons. The committee supported the idea of only allowing corridor frontage for access drives and roads for industrial uses – and by not allowing industrial structures (buildings, parking lots, etc.) to front or have visual access to the corridor. This idea supports other discussions of limiting direct access to the main roadways and providing high-quality aesthetics along the corridors.

The committee discussed the impact on Washington Township of future growth at the Indianapolis Executive Airport. While consensus could not be reached regarding how growth in that area of the township should occur, the group recommended that this issue receive further attention by the Steering Committee. They suggested this issue as a separate "Special Study" for additional review and consideration.

The attached pages are the notes from all of the meetings of this subcommittee. The notes outline the meeting discussions.

August 23, 2005
Public Safety Building

Corridors Subcommittee

The committee was charged with identifying planning and development issues that pertain to the main corridors of the township. They were also charged with coming up with a vision statement for the future development of the area. The vision statement exercise began with pairs of participants writing a joint vision statement. Then, the groups of two were paired with another group of two to make groups of four. The new larger groups were asked to combine their sets of vision statements into one statement. The notes below reflect the two vision statements from the two final groups.

Planning Issues:

- General:
 - Corridor appearance and general aesthetics
 - Median plantings to soften asphalt
 - Thoroughfare Plan update needs to be done
 - Gateway planning is important
 - Gateway signage
 - Other use of corridors like monorail transportation
 - Added corridors of Towne Road and 146th Street
 - Define actual corridor area/depth of corridors
 - Need zoning ordinances to back up comprehensive plan
- U.S. 31
 - Could work with INDOT to trade off S.R. 38 interchange with one at 161st street to help with trail access and twp east west traffic.
 - The need for parallel (frontage) road systems
 - Monon and Midland Trail impacts
 - Getting from west to east side of U.S. 31
 - McGregor Park at northeast corner of S.R. 38 and U.S. 31 is an asset
 - Do we plan for free
- S.R. 32
 - Airport influence
 - Eagletown and Jolietville influence
 - Lane widths through Downtown Westfield

Vision Statement Items:

Group 1:

- Widen south side of SR 32 through Downtown (Park St to East St)
- Have consistent number of through lanes for each corridor, township wide
- Expand corridor area to include 146th Street and Towne Road
- Employment Sector/Businesses
- No Residential
- Master Plan

- Include Greenspace
- Minimize access cuts on all corridors
- Transition between differing uses
- High architectural standards
- Visibility
- Attractive/Aesthetics
- Landscape Medians -- look like a parkway

Group 2:

- Town identification monuments
- Historic Preservation
- Maintain traffic flow
- Borders
- Alternative Transportation opportunities
- Parks as destinations
- Trail overpasses
- Possible Town Hall relocation
- Mix uses along all corridors

VISION STATEMENT

Corridors Sub-committee

This subcommittee seeks to establish a blueprint for the US31, SR32, and SR 38 corridors in Washington Township, Hamilton County, Indiana. To the degree possible, the 146th Street and the Towne Road corridors should benefit from this vision as well.

The members of this subcommittee see these corridors containing a mixture of master planned uses of high architectural standards for design, detailing, and use of materials, and including both business and public uses, but no residential or open industrial uses. Wherever possible these corridors must incorporate and highlight the history of Westfield and Washington Township. Additionally, if a relocation of Town Hall is required, a corridor location should be considered.

These corridors will include liberal, heavily landscaped transitions between uses to assure a harmonious flow from one use to another. We also see these corridors integrating a destination park with access to our alternative transportation corridors, which must include overpasses and/or other features to assure easy, safe, use of our multi-purpose alternative transportation corridors. The corridors should include parallel frontage roads to enable limiting egress to and from the highway.

We see the thoroughfares incorporating a gateway appearance, consistent number of travel lanes with good traffic flow, landscaped medians, liberal rights-of-way, and including town and historic identification signs and monuments.

August 30, 2005
Public Safety Building

Corridors Subcommittee

The subcommittee performed a S.W.O.T. analysis on the corridors. A S.W.O.T. analysis looks at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats towards a community. This exercise was performed as one large group. Under each heading, the top two issues were identified by group consensus. Some issues were combined during the ranking process because they are similarly related or address a similar issue.

Strengths:

1. Corridors connect us regionally (to 465, I-65, I-74, I-69)
2. Airport
2. Open land along corridors (mostly flat land)
- Crossroads of Hamilton County – this is unique
- Good place to raise/educate kids
- U.S. 31
- Ability to grow/expand
- Growing labor force
- Fiber-optic opportunities
- Trails (Midland/Monon)
- High Education Levels
- Local history/heritage
- Parks (Cool Creek/McGregor)
- Affordable cost of living

Weaknesses:

1. U.S. 31 – unknown future
2. Traffic flow (U.S. 31, S.R. 32)
- Greyhound Pass – traffic problems; poorly planned
- Eyesores along S.R. 32 (west of U.S. 31)
- Landscaping along corridors – appropriateness of standards as they relate to the building architecture and design
- S.R. 32 Downtown – Number of lanes; on-street parking
- Not enough parking available
- Lack of adequate right-of-way – roadways are too narrow
- Lack of un-timed signals
- Not any Public/Mass Transportations opportunities

Opportunities:

1. We can shape our corridors (look, uses, etc...)
1. Manage growth
1. Set standards now for future growth (building design/materials, etc...)
2. Attract quality businesses because of our corridors – good regional connectivity for businesses
2. Capitalize on Airport (has second longest runway in 5 county area; has high-tech, instrument-approach equipment available)
 - a. High-value office/industrial uses desired around the airport
- Preserve/keep existing businesses
- Possible employment within/adjacent to the corridors
- Diverse areas within corridors – Downtown, Eagletown, Jolietville, to name a few
- Land swap undesirable development away from corridors/road frontage

Threats:

1. Divisiveness of community

1. Apathy in community

2. Growth – fears of unknown – what's the proper balance of uses?

2. No growth – tax base required for high quality of life

• Airport – noise

• Through-traffic

• INDOT

• Carmel

• Hamilton County growth

• Low-quality employment

• Transient residents

September 6, 2005
Public Safety Building

Corridors Subcommittee

At this meeting, the subcommittee discussed different criteria that they thought should be used in making land use decisions in Washington Township. These criteria were established for five main land use classifications: Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, and Recreational. The discussions were held to a broad level with the idea that these criteria can be applied township wide, rather than to a specific site or location. The subcommittee developed a list of supporting criteria for determining land use locations. As with all information that is produced in this committee, this data will be passed along to the Steering Committee for their review, analysis, and use in helping to shape the future land use policy of this township.

Residential

- Road/Thoroughfare Support
- Convenience/Access
- Access to recreation
- Access to schools
- Affordable
- Established Neighborhoods
- Not Carmel

Commercial

- Produce Jobs/Money
- Pedestrian Friendly
- Land for Amenities
- Clustering of Uses
- Amenities
- Transitions/Land Uses
- Road/Thoroughfare Support
- Corners/Intersections
- Architectural Standards

Industrial

- Accessibility
- Infrastructure
- Environmentally Sound
- Minimal/Limited Visibility
- Enclosed – located on roadway frontage
- Open – located off of roadway frontage

Institutional

- Accessibility
- Visibility
- People/Population Base
Demographics

Recreational (Transitional Land Uses)

- Population
Demographics
- Accessibility
- Visibility

September 13, 2005
Public Safety Building

Corridors Subcommittee

This meeting continued the discussions that had begun the previous week. The committee discussed the land use criterion in further detail. They discussed residential uses, commercial uses, and transitional uses at this meeting. The next meeting will conclude this exercise by discussing criterion for industrial uses, institutional uses, and recreational uses.

Residential

- Develop subdivisions on corridors, as opposed to developing single lots – in order to minimize drive/access cuts
- Maintain natural features (topography)
- Single lots on low-traveled roads
- Attached residential on high-traveled roads
- Provide all types of housing opportunities (detached and attached)
- Locate density towards a project's interior
 - Provide greenspace on the perimeter/visible side
 - Promote land conservation by clustering buildings
- Combination/Mixed Uses in Downtown, Eagletown, Jolietville – including Residential, Commercial, Office
- Provide amenities with attached residential
- Proximity slope attached residential from the street

Commercial

- Amenities for commercial development should include:
 - Park/Park-like setting
 - Outdoor central seating opportunities
 - Ability to easily navigate development by foot and vehicles
 - Ability to enjoy outdoor/indoor amenities
- Aesthetic treatments for commercial developments should include:
 - Low-profile landscaping
 - High-quality architecture
 - Controlled signage (height/materials)
 - Eliminating outdoor storage/clutter
- Reduce impervious surfaces by building parking garages where applicable (based on intensity of use) – Is Downtown an option?
 - Retail uses on the street front/ground floor of parking garages
 - Incentives, such as Tax Abetments, are needed to make this happen
- Protect natural environment (topography)
- Locate parking lots on the rear/sides of businesses that front on a corridor
- Big box retailers should:
 - Locate north of S.R. 32
 - Build to high architectural standards
 - Build amenities into the development

Other Issues

- Transitions
 - Use greenspace as transitional areas
 - Locate intensity towards a project's interior

- High architectural standards
- Use office parks as transitional areas
- Trails
- Alternative Transportation
 - Provide network of trails throughout the community
 - Trails internal to developments as well

September 20, 2005
Public Safety Building

Corridors Subcommittee

This meeting concluded discussions that had begun the previous two week. The committee discussed the land use criterion in further detail. They discussed industrial uses, institutional uses, and recreational uses.

Industrial

- Do not allow curb cuts directly onto the U.S. 31, S.R. 32, S.R. 38, and arterial frontages
- Provide shared access to industry from corridors, no direct access for industry onto corridors
- Provide frontage roads along corridors to help with traffic flow
- Develop internal roadways and access roads that work together and with neighbors
- Number of road cuts allowed on corridors should be determined by the intensity of land use
- Make sure that necessary road construction standards are followed so that the industrial roads can properly handle industrial traffic
- Protect the night sky from light pollution
- Appropriate abutting land uses (for example: use light industry to buffer heavy industry from residential)
- Identify appropriate uses along Towne Road – should it be industrial/commercial given its future as a primary arterial that runs township wide?
- Amenities for industrial development should include:
 - Park/Park-like setting
 - Outdoor central seating opportunities
 - Ability to easily navigate development by foot and vehicles
 - Ability to enjoy outdoor/indoor amenities
- Aesthetic treatments for industrial developments should include:
 - Low-profile landscaping
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 - Eliminating outdoor storage/clutter
- Reduce impervious surfaces by building parking garages where applicable (based on intensity of use) – Is Downtown an option?
 - Retail uses on the street front/ground floor of parking garages
 - Incentives, such as Tax Abetments, are needed to make this happen
- Protect natural environment (topography)
- Locate parking lots on the rear/sides of businesses that front on a corridor
- Explore routing options for truck traffic
 - Route traffic away from residential development
 - Encourage major corridor usage for trucks, instead of secondary roads
 - Explore speed limit and weight limit restrictions on roadways

Institutional

- Direct access to corridors not important
 - Churches, schools, and museums/arts (and other institutional uses) should not be located directly on a corridor
 - Except for medical uses (such as a hospital) and possibly other public safety uses (such as police and fire protection)
- Don't take prime land/corridor frontage away from the community's assessed valuation for institutional uses
- Visual access is important for all institutional uses, but physical access is not as important

- New institutional developments should provide amenities
- Develop incentives to gain amenities with new development
- Protect existing amenities
- Airport

Parks & Recreation

(Trails – Paths)

- Develop a park and trails system that is integrated with each other and with other land uses within the corridor area
- Use parks and recreational uses as a transition between differing land uses
- Encourage the reuse of brownfields into a park/recreation area
- Encourage/explore the technology of surveillance, security, and safety in parks
- Locate recreational uses off of the corridors
- Market values for land required – future use
- Combine the park departments of the town and township for efficiency
- Cooperate with the county parks department for the development of “trend” parks (i.e. skate parks, splash parks, bark parks, etc...)

September 27, 2005
Westfield Town Hall

Corridors Subcommittee

This was the final meeting of the Corridors subcommittee. All attendees were given a copy of the draft report and were asked to review it for corrections and changes. The committee offered comments and changes they would like to see made to the report. Changes to the draft report will be made by staff and distributed back to the committee for their review before the report is sent to the Steering Committee.

The committee also selected its representative to make a presentation to the Steering Committee at the October 18 meeting. The group decided to meet one final time on October 11 at 7 PM at Westfield Town Hall to review the presentation.